

U.S. Congresswoman  
**TAMMY DUCKWORTH**  
Proudly Serving Illinois' 8th District



## 8<sup>th</sup> District Community Service Guide

April 2016

Dear Neighbors,

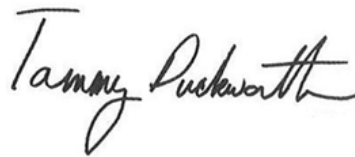
I consider myself lucky to have been born into a family that valued service to both one's country and one's community. Whether defending our nation as a Black Hawk pilot abroad or serving our Veterans and those in need at home, my life has been enriched by the opportunities I've had to serve my country and fellow citizens, both in and out of uniform. And I know from those experiences that engaging with one's community and helping others helps foster a sense of shared sacrifice and — at a time when our politics seem more focused on tearing us apart than bringing us together — that shared sacrifice will help us rekindle the national unity that has made us the strongest nation in the world.

But while most Americans are aware of the opportunity to serve their country in the Armed Forces, far fewer know of their options when it comes to civilian national service — but that service is also valuable; it also helps build a better nation. We should feel a similar sense of national pride for those willing to volunteer their time that we feel for those willing to risk life and limb, and we should encourage citizens to serve not just in the military but also in our cities and neighborhoods.

That's why I'm working in Congress and I will soon introduce legislation to empower all Americans — regardless of race, ethnicity, income or background — to serve their country and fellow citizens, just as I have been lucky enough to do. But while I am putting the finishing touches on my 21<sup>st</sup> Century American Service Act, I am also issuing this Community Service Guide to provide the people of the Eighth District a better understanding of the many current opportunities to give back to their communities.

I hope you find this guide useful and I look forward to continuing my work in Congress to help ensure all Americans wishing to serve have the opportunity to do so.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tammy Duckworth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "T" and a stylized "D".

Tammy Duckworth  
Member of Congress

## Contents

National Community Service Opportunities .....	4
AmeriCorps .....	4
Senior Corps .....	5
Peace Corps.....	7
Local Volunteer Opportunities.....	8
The Serve Illinois Commission.....	8
Volunteering with Your County .....	8
DuPage County.....	8
Kane County .....	9
Cook County .....	9
Serving Veterans .....	9
Park Districts .....	10
Opportunities for Organizations .....	14
CNCS Programs .....	14
AmeriCorps and Senior Corps Grant Funding.....	14
Social Innovation Fund Grant Program.....	16
Working with Our Office .....	17

## Disclaimer

This guide, which provides information consolidated from several government sources, is provided by Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth's office to Eighth District residents as an easy reference to local and national community service opportunities that they may consider participating in. Organizations featured in this guide are in no way endorsed by the House of Representatives or the Office of Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth. While this guide offers information on a number of service-related opportunities in the Eighth District and around the country, it is not intended to be exhaustive. Please let us know if you are aware of other options not listed in this guide, as we will periodically update it to include additional submissions. The Congresswoman's office can be reached at [DOInfo.Duckworth@mail.house.gov](mailto:DOInfo.Duckworth@mail.house.gov).

## National Community Service Opportunities

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is a federal agency working to “improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.” CNCS engages more than 5 million Americans every year in national community service programs focused on one or more of six areas: Disaster Services, Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Stewardship, Healthy Futures, Veterans and Military Families.

Eight District residents and others interested in pursuing one-time or long-term ongoing volunteer opportunities should visit [Serve.gov](https://serve.gov) to browse service options by zip code, find volunteer toolkits and read about CNCS initiatives.

CNCS also oversees three core service programs: AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and the Social Innovation Fund. More information about each of these programs can be found in this guide.

### AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is a civic service program supported by the federal government in partnership with a wide network of foundations, businesses, faith communities and other entities that offers individuals interested in long-term civic service engagements (generally between 10 months and one year) an opportunity to serve both their country and community. AmeriCorps programs also offer members a change to gain real-world work experience and leadership skills while providing a chance for young Americans to give back to their community and nation.

AmeriCorps participants are often eligible for several benefits, including student loan deferment, training, living allowance, limited health benefits and even financial assistance to help pay for college, graduate school, vocational training or to repay student loans. AmeriCorps Members are also eligible for participation in the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program (PSFL).

While most AmeriCorps assignments are full time, each program may have slightly different requirements and time commitments. Generally AmeriCorps participants are between 18-24 years old, though there is no upper limit for Team Leaders. Each program has a different application process but individuals can expect to be asked to provide information about their education, volunteer and work histories as well as a statement of desire to participate in a specific program.

AmeriCorps programs cover a wide range of areas of service from improving the environment, helping seniors, education, healthcare, disaster relief and much, much more. Eight District residents and others interested in AmeriCorps can browse programs by interest area, geographical area and type at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameri-corps/>

## Senior Corps

Senior Corps is a national service initiative for individuals 55 years of age and over who wish to use their skills and energy to improve their communities. Senior Corps operates three programs: Foster Grandparents, RSVP and Senior Companions. Each program offers volunteer opportunities through a network of non-profits, state and local agencies.

Volunteers in the Senior Corps can serve as mentors, coaches and companions to people in need and contribute their skills and knowledge to community-based projects and organizations. Senior Corps programs train volunteers, who in turn receive an opportunity to have valuable life experiences of their own.

Individuals interested in volunteering through the Senior Corps should reach out to the local Senior Corps affiliates in their area. Contact information for several Senior Corps affiliates is provided on the following page.

### **Foster Grandparents**

Foster Grandparents serve as friends, teachers, role models and coaches to at-risk children in their community. Volunteers are asked to commit a minimum of 15 hours each week to serving in schools, hospitals, daycare facilities and other locales. Volunteers may be asked to help care for infants and children with special needs, tutor grade school children one-on-one, mentor troubled teenagers and young mothers, or given any number of other responsibilities. Information for local Foster Grandparent programs can be found on the next page.

### **RSVP**

RSVP is the largest senior volunteer network in the country and the hours and responsibilities are as diverse as the volunteers who serve in the program. From health and wellness programs to organizing neighborhood watches to renovating homes for disabled seniors, RSVP offers a plethora of opportunities for seniors wishing to serve their communities. Additionally, if RSVP does not already offer prospective volunteers with a program that interests them, the organization may be able to develop a new program tailored for the volunteer. Contact information for local RSVP chapters is located on the next page.

### **Senior Companions**

Senior Companions are volunteers who assist local seniors that have difficulty with daily living tasks like shopping, paying bills or housekeeping. Beyond assisting local seniors to remain independent, Senior Companion volunteers make a difference by providing an invaluable relationship to fellow seniors. The goal of Senior Companions is to help seniors, who might otherwise move to institutional care, remain independent. Some Senior Companion volunteers may qualify for a tax-free hourly stipend. To find out more information about how to become a Senior Companion, contact the local Senior Companion service provider listed below.

Foster Grandparents	
FGP of Suburban Cook, Lake and McHenry Counties Uhlich Children's Advantage Network 3737 N Mozart Chicago, IL 60618 773-588-0180 <a href="http://www.ucanchicago.org/">http://www.ucanchicago.org/</a>	Maryam Sousan Mentoring and Educational Coordinator <a href="mailto:maryam.sousan@ucanchicago.org">maryam.sousan@ucanchicago.org</a>
RSVP	
RSVP of Northern Cook and Northern DuPage Counties HandsOn Suburban Chicago 2121 S Goebbert Rd Arlington Heights, IL 60005 847-228-1006 <a href="http://www.handsonsuburbanchicago.org">http://www.handsonsuburbanchicago.org</a>	Linda McLaughlin Project Manager <a href="mailto:linda.mclaughlin@volunteerinfo.net">linda.mclaughlin@volunteerinfo.net</a>
Kane, Kendall, McHenry Counties RSVP Senior Services Associates 101 S Grove Ave Elgin, IL 60120 (847) 741-0404 <a href="http://www.seniorservicesassoc.org/">http://www.seniorservicesassoc.org/</a>	Debbie Danitz RSVP Program Director <a href="mailto:ddanitz@seniorservicesassoc.org">ddanitz@seniorservicesassoc.org</a>
RSVP of West Suburban Cook and Southern DuPage Counties* Triton College 2000 Fifth Avenue River Grove, IL 60171 708-456-0300 Ext. 3603	Kay Frey RSVP Program Director <a href="mailto:kfrey@triton.edu">kfrey@triton.edu</a>  *Also coordinates a Senior Companion program
Senior Companion Program	
SCP of Suburban Cook County Rich County Township Senior Center 297 Liberty Drive Park Forest, Illinois 60466	Sally Fuhrmann Senior Services Director 708-748-5454

## Peace Corps

The Peace Corps is a volunteer service program run by the United States government that sends volunteers all over the world to assist underserved communities to address the issues that face them. Peace Corps volunteers commit to a two year term of service to work on a project that fits into one of six categories of service: education, youth in development, health, agriculture, community economic development and the environment.

In addition to the specific help any one Peace Corps program provides, the Peace Corps helps the United States foster friendly relationships with countries across the globe. As stated in their mission, a primary goal of the Peace Corps is to promote “world peace and friendship.”

Joining the Peace Corps provides volunteers with a unique opportunity to make a contribution to the global community and to develop real world skills they can bring back home. The Peace Corps provides language and cross-cultural training to all its volunteers, which serve them well beyond their term in the program.

Additionally, Peace Corps members can enjoy benefits like student loan forgiveness through the Public Service Loan Forgiveness, some Perkins loans may be eligible for partial cancellation and members receive a "readjustment" allowance of more than \$8,000 when they finish their program. The Peace Corps also provides full medical and dental coverage while participating in the program, 48 paid vacation days, a monthly living and housing stipend as well as travel to and from their country of service.

The application and admissions process for the Peace Corps is intensive and requires prospective volunteers to submit a medical history, answer multiple questionnaires and complete an in-person interview. Over 90% of Peace Corps programs require individuals to hold a Bachelor's degree and have a history of volunteer service.

Eighth District residents interested in applying to the Peace Corps can search service opportunities and begin their application by visiting, <http://www.peacecorps.gov/>.

## Local Volunteer Opportunities

Between local non-profit organizations, park districts, hospitals, schools and a host of other organizations, there are countless opportunities for volunteer service the Eighth District outside of the Corporation for National Community Service umbrella as well. This section of the guide highlights several high-need, high-volume volunteer service opportunities in the Eighth District and identifies several key community service figures in our community.

### The Serve Illinois Commission

The State of Illinois operates a 40 member, bi-partisan board which acts to promote volunteerism throughout the state and administers Illinois' AmeriCorps program. The Serve Illinois Commission provides a number of resources to the residents of Illinois who are interested in supporting their community through volunteer service by sponsoring nearly a dozen Days of Service each year, operating the Illinois Volunteer Management Network and the Volunteer Connectors of Illinois program.

One of the most convenient services provided by the Serve Illinois Commission is their volunteer opportunity search tool. Anyone interested in volunteer programs in Illinois can browse the countless opportunities by visiting, <http://www.serve.illinois.gov/>. Beyond the search tool, the Commission's website provides information about all their programs and is a great starting point for individuals and organizations interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities in Illinois.

### Volunteering with Your County

The Eighth Congressional District covers a wide swath of Chicago's Northwest suburbs and represents all or part of 37 different municipalities, 12 townships, 3 counties and dozens of school districts. While not all these units of government and school districts have formalized volunteer programs, many do. The volunteer opportunities available in your local community are diverse and offer individuals the chance to make an impact by teaming up with like-minded individuals on everything from volunteer fire departments to neighborhood watch programs.

The three counties that make up the Eighth District (Cook, DuPage and Kane) provide useful resources for prospective volunteers and other interested individuals.

#### DuPage County

421 N. County Farm Road  
Wheaton, IL 60187  
630-407-6500

<http://www.dupageco.org/volunteer>

Giving DuPage is a non-profit entity which oversees many DuPage County volunteer programs and charities. Visit <http://givingdupage.org/> to access dozens of current county volunteer postings ranging from animal care to senior services.



## Kane County

719 Batavia Avenue  
Geneva, Illinois 60134  
630-232-3400

Kane County lists their most popular volunteer programs on their website at <http://www.countyofkane.org/Pages/volunteer.aspx>. This list, however, is not exhaustive. Individuals interested in finding more volunteer options in Kane County should browse each County Department page for more complete service opportunity listings. Nearly every Kane County department offers some sort of volunteer opportunity throughout the year.

You can visit <http://www.countyofkane.org/Pages/OrgChart.aspx> for a list of Departments to get started.

## Cook County

118 N. Clark Street  
Chicago, IL 60602  
312-443-5500

You can visit <http://www.cookcountyil.gov/agencies/> for a breakdown of the agencies within the Cook County government. Nearly every department has their own volunteer program and prospective volunteers should start there to locate opportunities.

## Serving Veterans

Volunteers are an integral part of the Veteran Administration (VA) health care system. For example, every year at the VA at Hines over 1,000 individuals volunteer to assist patients and staff, donating more than 120,000 hours of service collectively in areas like nursing, ambulatory care clinics, information desks, food service, recreation therapy and much more.

VA hospitals work to pair volunteers with services that closely match their talents. Prior to volunteering, individuals must complete an application, attend a volunteer orientation and meet some basic eligibility requirements.

Edward Hines, Jr., Veterans Administration Hospital 5000 S 5th Ave Hines, IL 60141 (708) 202-2523 <a href="http://www.hines.va.gov/giving/index.asp">http://www.hines.va.gov/giving/index.asp</a>	Jesse Brown VA Medical Center 820 S Damen Ave Chicago, IL 60612 (312) 569-8387 Ext. 56109 <a href="http://www.chicago.va.gov/giving/">http://www.chicago.va.gov/giving/</a>	Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center 3001 Green Bay Rd North Chicago, IL 60064 224-610-3714 <a href="http://www.lovell.fhcc.va.gov/giving/">http://www.lovell.fhcc.va.gov/giving/</a>
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## Park Districts

Volunteers are the lifeblood of local park districts that help provide safe, healthy and fun spaces for families and individuals to enjoy. The Eighth District is fortunate to have a large number of beautiful parks and family-friendly activities. Park districts rely on local volunteers to get involved with their community by coaching youth sports, cleaning up local parks and coordinating cultural events, holidays and other events.

Volunteer opportunities and responsibilities vary. Individuals looking for more information on specific services can reach out to their local park district by using the information contained below:

<p><b>Barrington Hills Park District</b>  235 Lions Pkwy  Barrington, IL 60010  (847) 381-0687  <a href="http://www.bhillsparkd.org/">http://www.bhillsparkd.org/</a></p>	<p><b>Bartlett Park District</b>  696 W. Stearns Rd.  Bartlett, IL 60103  (630) 540-4800  <a href="http://www.bartlettparks.org/volunteer.aspx">http://www.bartlettparks.org/volunteer.aspx</a></p> <p>Stephanie FitzSimons  (630) 540-4834  <a href="mailto:sfitzsimons@bartlettparks.org">sfitzsimons@bartlettparks.org</a></p>
<p><b>Bensenville Park District</b>  1000 W Wood St  Bensenville, IL 60106  (630) 766-7015  <a href="http://www.bensenvilleparkdistrict.org/pdcm/volunteer-with-us">http://www.bensenvilleparkdistrict.org/pdcm/volunteer-with-us</a></p> <p>Mary Wagner  630-766-7015, Ext. 2014  <a href="mailto:mwagner@bensenvilleparkdistrict.org">mwagner@bensenvilleparkdistrict.org</a></p>	<p><b>Bloomington Park District</b>  172 S Circle Ave  Bloomington, IL 60108  (630) 529-3650  <a href="http://www.bloomingtonparks.org/get-involved">http://www.bloomingtonparks.org/get-involved</a></p>
<p><b>Carol Stream Park District</b>  301 W Lies Rd  Carol Stream, IL 60188  (630) 784-6100  <a href="http://www.csparks.org/about-us/volunteers/">http://www.csparks.org/about-us/volunteers/</a></p> <p>Megan Hennessy  (630) 784-6185</p>	<p><b>Des Plaines Park District</b>  2222 Birch Street  Des Plaines, IL 60018  (847) 391-5700  <a href="http://www.DPParks.org">http://www.DPParks.org</a></p> <p>Gene Haring  N/A</p>

<p><b>Dundee Township Park District (Carpentersville, Dundee, East Dundee)</b>  21 N Washington St  Carpentersville, IL 60110  (847) 551-4300  <a href="http://www.dtpd.org/index.asp">http://www.dtpd.org/index.asp</a></p>	<p><b>Elgin Park District</b>  City of Elgin Parks and Recreation  100 Symphony Way  Elgin, IL 60120  (847) 531-7000  <a href="http://www.cityofelgin.org/index.aspx?NID=859">http://www.cityofelgin.org/index.aspx?NID=859</a></p> <p>Cindy Corrigan  <a href="mailto:corrigan_c@cityofelgin.org">corrigan_c@cityofelgin.org</a>  (847) 931-6770</p>
<p><b>Elk Grove Village Park District</b>  1000 Wellington Ave  Elk Grove Village IL 60007  (847) 437-9494  <a href="http://www.elkgrovecparks.org/Employment">http://www.elkgrovecparks.org/Employment</a></p> <p>Christine Matlak  <a href="mailto:cmatlak@elkgrovecparks.org">cmatlak@elkgrovecparks.org</a></p>	<p><b>Elmhurst Park District</b>  375 W. First St  Elmhurst, IL 60126  (630) 993-8900  <a href="http://www.epd.org/volunteer">http://www.epd.org/volunteer</a></p>
<p><b>Glen Ellyn Park District</b>  185 Spring Avenue  Glen Ellyn, IL 60137  (630) 858-2462  <a href="http://www.gepark.org/">http://www.gepark.org/</a></p>	<p><b>Glendale Heights Park District</b>  250 Civic Center Plaza  Glendale Heights, IL 60139  (630) 260-6060  <a href="http://www.glendaleheightsparksrecreationfacilities.com/default.html">http://www.glendaleheightsparksrecreationfacilities.com/default.html</a></p>
<p><b>Hanover Park Park District</b>  1919 Walnut Ave  Hanover Park, IL 60133  (630) 837-6300  <a href="http://hpparks.org">http://hpparks.org</a></p> <p>Jeff Acks  (630) 837-2468</p>	<p><b>Hoffman Estates Park District</b>  1685 W Higgins Rd  Hoffman Estates, IL 60169  (847) 885-7500  <a href="http://www.heparks.org/general-information/volunteering/">http://www.heparks.org/general-information/volunteering/</a></p> <p>Peg Kusmierski  (847) 310-3617  <a href="mailto:pkusmierski@heparks.org">pkusmierski@heparks.org</a></p>

<b>Itasca Park District</b> 350 E. Irving Park Road Itasca, IL 60143 630-773-2257 <a href="http://www.itascaparkdistrict.com/315/Volunteer-Position">http://www.itascaparkdistrict.com/315/Volunteer-Position</a>	<b>Lombard Park District</b> 820 S Finley Rd Lombard, IL 60148 (630) 620-7322 <a href="http://lombardparks.com/volunteer/">http://lombardparks.com/volunteer/</a>
<b>Medinah Park District</b> 22W130 Thorndale Ave Medinah, IL 60157 (630) 893-2560 <a href="http://www.medinahparkdistrict.org/About_Us/Volunteer_Opportunities.htm">http://www.medinahparkdistrict.org/About_Us/Volunteer_Opportunities.htm</a>	<b>Mount Prospect Park District</b> 1000 W. Central Road Mount Prospect, IL 60056 (847) 255-5380 <a href="https://www.mppd.org/">https://www.mppd.org/</a>
<b>Oak Brook Park District</b> 1450 Forest Gate Rd Oak Brook, IL 60523 (630) 990-4233 <a href="http://www.obparks.org/volunteer/">http://www.obparks.org/volunteer/</a>  Karen Spandikow (630) 645-9589 <a href="mailto:kspandikow@obparks.org">kspandikow@obparks.org</a>	<b>Oakbrook Terrace Park District</b> 1S325 Ardmore Ave Villa Park, IL 60181 (630) 627-6103 <a href="http://www.obtpd.org/volunteer">http://www.obtpd.org/volunteer</a>  Mike Gianatasio <a href="mailto:mike@obtpd.org">mike@obtpd.org</a>
<b>Palatine Park District</b> 1425 N Oak St Palatine, IL 60067 (847) 359-9664 <a href="http://www.palatineparks.org/rccms/volunteer/">http://www.palatineparks.org/rccms/volunteer/</a>  Amanda McGovern <a href="mailto:amcgovern@palatineparks.org">amcgovern@palatineparks.org</a>	<b>Rolling Meadows Park District</b> 3000 Central Road Rolling Meadows, IL 60008 (847) 818-3220 <a href="http://rmparks.org/District-Info/employment.htm">http://rmparks.org/District-Info/employment.htm</a>
<b>Roselle Park District</b> 555 W. Bryn Mawr Roselle, IL 60172 (630) 894-4200 <a href="http://rparks.org/">http://rparks.org/</a>	<b>Schaumburg Park District</b> 235 E Beech Dr Schaumburg, IL 60193 (847) 985-2115 <a href="http://www.parkfun.com/about-schaumburg-park-district/volunteer">http://www.parkfun.com/about-schaumburg-park-district/volunteer</a>  Kathleen Benson (847) 985-2141

<b>South Barrington Park District</b> 3 Tennis Club Lane South Barrington, IL 60010 (847) 381-7515 <a href="http://sbpd.net/#">http://sbpd.net/#</a>	<b>South Elgin Park District</b> 10 N. Water Street South Elgin, IL 60177 Phone: 847-622-0003 <a href="http://www.southelgin.com/">http://www.southelgin.com/</a>
<b>Streamwood Park District</b> 550 S Park Blvd Streamwood, IL 60107 (630) 483-3010 <a href="http://www.streamwoodparkdistrict.org/">http://www.streamwoodparkdistrict.org/</a>	<b>Villa Park Park District</b> 320 East Wildwood Street Villa Park, Illinois 60181 (630) 834-8525 <a href="http://www.vprd.org/">http://www.vprd.org/</a>
<b>Wheeling Park District</b> 333 W Dundee Rd Wheeling, IL 60090 (847) 465-3333 <a href="http://www.applitrack.com/wheelingparkdistrict/onlineapp/">http://www.applitrack.com/wheelingparkdistrict/onlineapp/</a>	<b>Wood Dale Park District</b> 111 Foster Ave Wood Dale, IL 60191 (630) 595-9333 <a href="http://www.wooddaleparkdistrict.org/">http://www.wooddaleparkdistrict.org/</a>

## Opportunities for Organizations

While there are countless ways for individuals to get involved with volunteer service on a national or local level, there are also a great number of resources available for service oriented non-profit and private organizations. This section will highlight select programs, grants and services open to organizations hoping to grow the impact they have on their communities.

### CNCS Programs

The Corporation for National and Community Service oversees countless volunteer opportunities around the country through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps and numerous other programs. CNCS does not individually operate each volunteer program; instead they provide grant funding to non-profits, faith and secular community-based organizations, public agencies, Indian tribes, and institutions of higher education, which then operate individual programs under the umbrella of a CNCS program.

There are several different ways to become a partner organization of CNCS and participate in their programs.

For an overview of all the funding opportunities available under CNCS visit:

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities>

### AmeriCorps and Senior Corps Grant Funding

#### **AmeriCorps State and National**

The AmeriCorps State and National grant program is designed to help expand existing service organizations that address issues in education, health, the environment, economic opportunity, Veterans and military families and disaster services. In short, organizations that wish to operate their own AmeriCorps program can apply through the State and National competition.

These grants only provide a portion of the funding needed to operate an AmeriCorps program; winning organizations must contribute matching funding to the program they wish to establish. These grant awards and the matching funds can only be used for program expenses; not general operating costs for an organization. Grant awards are for three years but are reviewed on a yearly basis.

Winning organizations are awarded an allotment of AmeriCorps members and the grant award funds are directly tied to the number of members awarded.

#### **AmeriCorps VISTA**

AmeriCorps Vista is a smaller AmeriCorps program designed specifically to establish and support programs that focus on poverty. This program is open primarily to non-profits, faith-based

organizations, community organizations and public agencies. The AmeriCorps VISTA program provides full-time AmeriCorps members to winning organizations.

However, the guidelines for applying, eligibility and scope of projects under VISTA is substantially different than the State and National Program and even varies by state. Organizations interested in learning more about applying to VISTA must set up a consultation with their state CNCS program officer. The contact information for the Illinois office is:

John Hosteny  
77 W Jackson Blvd, Suite 442  
Chicago, IL 60604  
Phone: (312) 353-3622  
Email: [IL@CNS.gov](mailto:IL@CNS.gov)

### **AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC)**

AmeriCorps NCCC is a full-time program of young men and women stationed at five different regional campuses across the country. NCCC members complete short-term service projects in their region and lead the CNCS Disaster recovery service initiative. Eligible organizations can request assistance from NCCC teams through the relevant regional office to address immediate needs in environmental stewardship and conservation, infrastructure improvement, energy conservation, urban and rural development and natural and other disasters.

Eligible organizations are defined as “non-profit organizations (secular and faith-based), local/state/federal governments, national/state parks, Indian tribes, and schools.” NCCC typically dispatches teams of 8-13 AmeriCorps members to approved sites for a period of 6-8 weeks. Approved organizations are expected to provide housing, training, technical assistance, supervision, supplies and help the NCCC team set goals within project.

Every situation that requires NCCC assistance is unique and must be discussed with the relevant regional office before requesting assistance. Contact information for the office that serves Illinois is:

**NCCC North Central Region**  
1004 G Avenue  
Vinton, IA 52349  
Tel: 319-472-9664  
Fax: 319-472-9666  
E-mail: [NCCCNorthCentral@cns.gov](mailto:NCCCNorthCentral@cns.gov)

### **RSVP, FCP and SCP**

Senior Corps operates three distinct programs – RSVP, Foster Grandparent Program (FCP) and the Senior Companionship Program (SCP). While the CNCS operates grant competitions for all three, RSVP is the only annual competition. The FCP and SCP grant award opportunities occurs on a very limited basis and often are only open to regions of specific need.

Organizations that wish to operate an RSVP program can apply through the CNCS RSVP grant program which opens up new rounds of funding every year. RSVP grant competitions typically open during the late summer and have application deadlines in August or September. Grant awards are designed for three years project periods with an annual review.

Eligible organizations are defined as “public agencies (including state and local agencies and other units of government); private nonprofit organizations (including community-based organizations, both faith-based and secular); institutions of higher education; and Indian tribes.”

Information about the 2016 competition has not been released yet. However, interested organizations can look at the 2015 announcement to get a sense of the requirements and performance measures required in an application. Visit <http://www.nationalservice.gov/build-your-capacity/grants/funding-opportunities/2014/2015-rsvp-competition> to review 2015 RSVP grant competition guidelines.

## **Social Innovation Fund Grant Program**

The Social Innovation Fund (SIF) is a grant program created by President Obama to identify innovative organizations in the non-profit sector and encourage their growth through federal grants and by mobilizing private resources to invest in their development. With a simple goal of “finding what works, and making it work for more people,” the SIF runs two competitive grant competition awards, SIF Classic and Pay for Success (PFS), both of which aim to identify evidence-based solutions to community-wide problems facing low-income communities across the country.

The Social Innovation Fund has provided \$214 million to more than 200 organizations and non-profits since its creation, and private-sector partners of the program have committed over \$500 million in matching funds.

While SIF programs are aimed at developing and expanding existing community service programs, there are a number of ways to get involved. This guide provides basic information for institutions interested in being a part of the SIF. However, non-profits, grantmaking organizations, private sector companies or individuals looking to invest in SIF programs should schedule a time to meet with a local SIF representative. Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth’s office can help facilitate an introduction to the appropriate SIF representative.

### **SIF Classic**

The SIF Classic grant is open to large grantmaking institutions – mostly states and large private foundations – in order to complement their own grant competitions with federal dollars. Awards range between \$1 million and \$10 million to eligible institutions. Winning institutions are expected to match every federal dollar that they will then pass on in grant competitions of their own design. These open competitions are to select, support, fund and evaluate community non-profits in a wide range of issue areas.



Grant competitions open up on a yearly basis and information regarding the next round should be available in the Spring of 2016. Information regarding SIF Classic sub grantee competitions can be found at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/social-innovation-fund/grant-competitions/requests-proposals-sif-classic>

### **Pay for Success**

Pay for Success is a funding competition open to grant-giving non-profit foundations and government entities, which must be able to match award funding themselves, with awards of between \$200,000 and \$1.8 million. Currently open Pay for Success sub-grantee competitions can be found at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/social-innovation-fund/grant-competitions/requests-proposals-sif-pay-success>

## **Working with Our Office**

The Office of Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth provides several resources for organizations interested in applying for any of the grants outlined above and all federal agency grants. The 'Grants' section on our webpage (<http://duckworth.house.gov/index.php/how-can-i-help-you/grants>) lays out basic best practices for applying for grants and lists a number of sources to help any organization get started looking.

When requested our office can check on the status of grant applications, request application specific debriefs from agencies and offer suggestions on navigating the federal grants world. Additionally, the Congresswoman can provide a letter of recommendation for qualified applicants. Visit, [http://duckworth.house.gov/images/pdf/letter\\_of\\_support\\_request\\_form\\_nl2.pdf](http://duckworth.house.gov/images/pdf/letter_of_support_request_form_nl2.pdf) to download an evaluation form.

For more information about working with our office please contact the Congresswoman's Community Outreach and Grants Coordinator, Dan McManus, at [daniel.mcmanus@mail.house.gov](mailto:daniel.mcmanus@mail.house.gov) or by phone at (847) 413-1959.